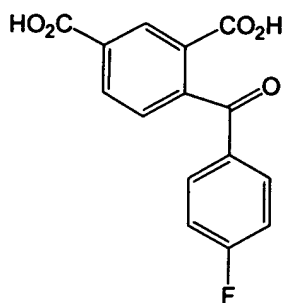


IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-7.

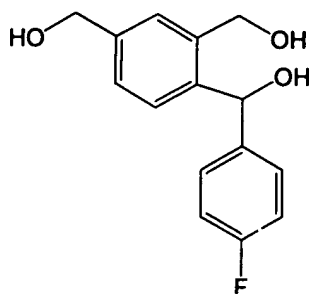
Please add the following claims:

21. (New) A method for the preparation of citalopram, which method comprises the steps of (a) reducing the compound of formula [II]



[II]

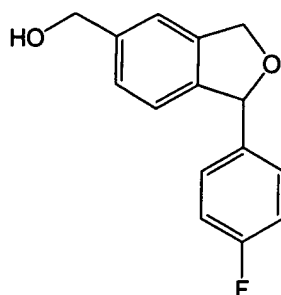
to form a compound of formula [VII]



[VII],

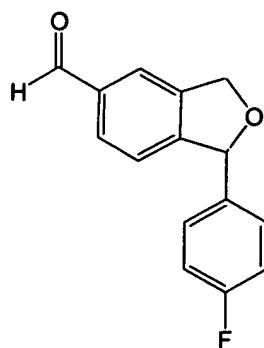
(b) cyclizing the compound of formula [VII] to form a compound of formula [III]

b1



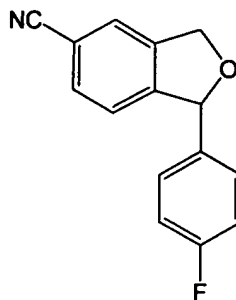
[III],

(c) oxidizing the compound of formula [III] to form an aldehyde compound of formula [V]



[V],

(d) converting the aldehyde compound of formula [V] to the corresponding 5-cyano compound of formula [VI]



[VI], and

(e) alkylating the 5-cyano compound of formula [VI] to form citalopram in the form of a base or an acid addition salt thereof.

b1

22. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the method further comprises the step of (f) isolating the citalopram in the form of a base or an acid addition salt thereof.

23. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the compound of formula [III] is oxidized to form the aldehyde compound of formula [V] by reacting the compound of formula [III] with manganese dioxide to form the aldehyde compound of formula [V].

24. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the method further comprises the step of (f) isolating the citalopram in the form of a base or an acid addition salt thereof.

25. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the aldehyde compound of formula [V] is converted to the corresponding 5-cyano compound of formula [VI] by the steps of (d1) condensing the aldehyde compound of formula [V] with hydroxylamine or a mineral acid salt thereof to form an oxime intermediate, and (d2) dehydrating the oxime intermediate to form the 5-cyano compound of formula [VI].

26. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the method further comprises the step of (f) isolating the citalopram in the form of a base or an acid addition salt thereof.

27. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the aldehyde compound of formula [V] is converted to the corresponding 5-cyano compound of formula [VI] by the steps of (d1) condensing the aldehyde compound of formula [V] with hydroxylamine or a mineral acid salt thereof to form an oxime intermediate, and (d2) dehydrating the oxime intermediate to form the 5-cyano compound of formula [VI].

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28. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the method further comprises the step of (f) isolating the citalopram in the form of a base or an acid addition salt thereof.
